

[ORIGINAL.]

**A LOVER'S LAMENT.**

BY JAMES FRANKLIN FITZ.

The mirage of Egyptian sands,  
 Illusive, fading like a dream:  
 The shadowy touch of moonlight hands  
 Upon the cheek in sinful gleam—  
 These are the types of transient bliss,  
 More futile than the moonbeam's kiss!  
 Of brief delights, full-mixed with shade;  
 Of flowers that bloom, alas! to fade,  
 And leave us, when their time is o'er,  
 More sad, more wretched than before!

Is it a dream?—or have these eyes  
 Beheld, in truth, thy living form?  
 Do phantoms of my brain arise,  
 Like boreal lights in winter skies,  
 To vex me with enchantment warm?  
 Nay! I have listened to thy words,  
 More pleasant than the song of birds;  
 With rapture have these senses known  
 Thy presence in those moments flown;  
 The witchery of thy soulful eyes  
 Has filled my breast with love-lorn sighs!  
 Each dear enchantment of thy mien,  
 Thy face, thy form; thyself once seen,  
 Are graven on my heart's blank lead,  
 Imperishable types of grief!

'Tis over now—the dream has fled,  
 Like mirage vain, or moonbeam wan!  
 The hopes, the joys which thou hast led  
 In happy train, with thee are gone!  
 An hour, a day—the little time  
 To linger o'er in mournful rhyme;  
 Yet hours like these are few and brief,  
 Fit to be wept with silent grief!  
 And thou art gone—and other skies  
 Enfold thee in their varied dyes.  
 O, may they softly, gently shed  
 Their dewy blessings on thy head!  
 Others by thee to-day are blessed,  
 And, woe is me! perhaps caressed.  
 Yet, lady, thou wilt not forget  
 The lonely stranger haply met;  
 Thy parting hand-clasp, warm and true,  
 Thy sweetly-spoken, sad adieu,  
 Are memories which may not depart  
 From out this weary, sorrowing heart,  
 Although—O heart of mine, be calm!—  
 That voice may be no more thy balm;  
 Although—O weeping soul, give o'er!—  
 That hand be pressed in mine no more!

[ORIGINAL.]

**DANGERS OF COUSINSHIP.**

BY EDWARD O. TUCKERMAN.

WHEN you were still in jacket and trousers; dear reader, if you are of the masculine gender; or in frocks and pinafore, if you belong to that gentler sex whose name is a synonyme for loveliness, did you not feel distressed at always find-

ing a moral trailing at the end of your favorite fairy tales, like a piece of dirty paper catching at the skirts of a magnificent silk dress, and dragged along over the pavement by its charming wearer, wholly unconscious of the grinning chimney-sweep and shop-boys? We recollect very well the vexation of spirit that filled our own youthful bosom, when gorgeous palaces and fair princesses vanished at the approach of some axiom of commonplace morality, such as "Be virtuous and you will be happy," "Vice always produces misery," and the like. If your moral is a necessary accompaniment of your story, why not give it to your little victims at the beginning, rather than at the end, on the same principle that physicians give the nauseous dose of cod liver oil first, and then afterwards the nice little bit of preserved ginger, to "take the taste out?" We, however, hold that a moral is a disagreeable excrescence, a wen on a beautiful nose, the fifth foot of the five-footed calf, the one great and tiresome superfluity. We preface the following veracious history, therefore, with the frank avowal that there is no moral to it that cannot be summed up in this short maxim—"Pretty cousins are dangerous things." But if you, sage reader, still believe that the moral is the soul, and the story only the body, why, just bury this soulless body in the grate, and turn your attention to that useful and instructive little work, entitled—"Plums for Good Boys: or, How to buy a Pound of Happiness with an Ounce of Self-Denial."

Who does not know the pleasures and conveniences of cousinship? If you are a lively young bachelor, how pleasant it is, when you make your annual visit up country, to be greeted by half a dozen rosy faces with a—"Fie, Cousin Tom! you ought to be ashamed of yourself for your impudence!" Then, your male cousins are capital fellows to go partridge shooting with! What royal times you have with them trout-fishing! Moreover, cousins pre-suppose uncles and aunts; and who ever made mince pies so well as Aunt Mervable, or told a story so well as Uncle Josh? The delights of cousinship are manifold; and so are the conveniences, too. If your cousins are nice girls and hearty, pleasant fellows, it makes them tenfold nicer and pleasanter to know they are your own kith and kin; and if otherwise, they are only cousins, after all, not brothers and sisters—and, good gracious! who cares for his cousins? But these considerations are palpable and self-evident; did you ever reflect on the dangers of the relationship? If not, read this warning exposition of them, and ponder its awful lessons with due solemnity.

## PART I.

IN WHICH THE HERO MAKES A RASH VOW.

IN the retired little village of Hanaford (don't consult your map—or if you must, look at Cochin-China; yea will find it there as soon as anywhere) no man was better known or more highly respected than Squire Ketchup. A selectman, a justice of the peace, the owner of some three hundred good acres and some ten or fifteen thousand dollars safely invested, he found life a "toler'bly pleasant kind of institooshun," as he phrased it; and he seemed disposed to make it "toler'bly pleasant" to those around him. He was very benevolent and open-handed, but shrewd withal; he had as keen a scent for an impostor as a dog has for a woodchuck, and about as much mercy, too. If one of his fellow-townsmen had a few hundreds to invest, he would "happen in" upon the squire some afternoon, and in the course of an hour or so, carelessly remark:

"Wall, squire, I dunno much about them 'ere sort of things, 'cause I aint so much in the way of hearin' on 'em as you men of prop'ty air, but I hearn 'em telling down at the store, t'other day, that the Hodge Podge Railroad is a doin' a purty smashing business, now-a-days, and makes consid'able dividends to the stockholders."

"Wall, yee," the squire would dryly say, "p'r'aps it doos do a purty smashing business; I calc'late it'll go to smash one of these days, directors and all. Tell ye what, neighbor, it don't pay to make dividends of ten per cent, and borrrer the money to do it with."

"Wall, I kinder thought as much," the other would say, closing his fingers tightly over something he had in his coat-pocket. "I sez to my old 'oman last week, 'Polly,' sez I, 'I don't b'lieve the Hodge Podge Railroad is worth half so much as the Cat's-Wool Factory; and Polly,' sez I, 'if I had a thousand dollars, it shouldn't go to the railroad, Polly. Eh, squire?'"

"Folkses has diffrent opinions," the squire would rejoin, with a sly twinkle in his eye. "I never sot much by the factory myself, but it's a free country, neighbor. I don't mind telling ye I consider them 'ere two critters mighty reaky kind of cattle. If I had a peck of dimes I didn't want to lay out on manure, and if there wasn't no claims upon me, sech as wife longing for a decent gown to go to meetin' with, or suthin' of the sort, wall, I dunno, I guess I might p'r'aps buy a few shares in the Farmers' Bank, or invest 'em in a safe mortgage. It doosn't do no good to 'make haste to be rich,' 'cause Scriptor's agin it, and Scriptor is gen'ally about

right, I expect. If I was you, I'd put your money in somewhere that you know it will be safe and pay you six per cent. There's more losses than wins when they play at speculatin'."

"Wall, I didn't exactly say, squire, that I'd any thought of layin' up money myself, jest now, but p'r'aps I may bimeby, if the Lord prospers me. Poor men like me, squire, hev other things to think of. Fine day, squire—good for the hayin'."

Now the worthy squire lived in a substantial, two-story house, with barns and outhouses around it, situated on the edge of a hill sloping gradually to the waters of the Assaquot River. Everything in the neighborhood, the orchards, the cornfields, the kitchen-garden, the little flower-plot in front of the house, the honeysuckle over the little porch, all betokened the careful farmer of easy circumstances. A matron of the true New England stamp, busy, good-humored and "smart," together with an only daughter, constituted the family of the squire; and it was commonly increased by the addition of a hired man or two. The daughter (we will be communicative and frank with you, gentle reader—she is our heroine) was a blithe, merry damsel of seventeen, of a generous and affectionate disposition, but withal, self-willed and (it must be confessed) a little coquettish. All the gay bloods of the quiet country village paid their homage at the feet of the triumphant little beauty, who was fully aware of her own charms and conquests. There was great strife and contention as to who should drive her to the temperance lecture, which was occasionally delivered in the "middle of the town," or drive her back from the huskings or other merry-makings, which were the especial scenes of her victories; a strife which not unfrequently resulted in the total discomfiture of all the contending parties, while she saucily declared that Pete Brown drove too slow and Jehu Crane drove too fast, and Ichabed Frey did not mind his driving at all, but kept looking at her; for her part, she couldn't conceive why he looked at her all the time. Was she a black slave from Kamschatka (her geography was rather vague), that she was to be stared at forever? And by this time, having worked herself into quite a little miff, she would jump into her father's sleigh, and vow she admired to ride three on a seat; while the rival aspirants to the honor of being her protector, were left to settle the quarrel among themselves as best they might. Her father used to watch her proceedings with a dry smile on his face, and simply say:

"Take care, Bess—it'll be their turn by-and-by!"

Things had been in this state for a year or two, and Bess had been growing more and more imperious, until the little tyrant was hardly to be endured, even by her most devoted admirers. In vain her father satirized, and her mother more seriously reproved her; she could no more help flirting than a bee could help buzzing. Her heart was kind, almost to excess; and the tears would come, at the mere thought of another's grief or suffering.

But the giddy-brained girl had never loved in her life, and how could she know that love is at once the root of half of the happiness and half of the misery in the world? She could not conceive that Jerry Williams could be touched, except in his vanity, when she smiled on his rival, Ike Jones; she did not care a snap of her pretty little finger for any of them—why should they care for her? So she coquetted and flirted to her heart's content, and felt lonely enough, when she sat down by herself to think; and she did think, once in a while.

For a long time past, the inhabitants of the little community of Hanaford had been ambitious to have an academy of their own, that they might "teach the young idea how to shoot" with guns of Hanaford manufacture. No one had been more energetic in promoting this scheme, than the squire; and at the last town-meeting he, with two others, had been appointed a committee to carry it into execution. An appropriation, deemed sufficient to start this school, was passed without one dissentient voice, except old Asa Stickleback, a crabbed, hard favored elder, who said that the town shouldn't put its fingers into his pockets, "jest to give Aaron Washburn's boy his schoolin' for nothin'." Of this committee, the squire was chairman; and on him devolved the duty of providing a teacher. Now there was some trouble in procuring just such a man as was wanted; and the squire was in some perplexity of mind about the matter, when one pleasant day in the latter part of July, the Dingtowntown and Greeham coach, which passes semi-weekly through Hanaford, rolled up to the squire's door, and dropped a young man with a carpet-bag and umbrella in his hand.

As he approached the door, he cried out in a cheery, manly voice:

"How d'ye do, all? Why, uncle, how hale you look! Never looked so well in your life—never!"

"Wall, lad, I aint in a consumption," responded the individual addressed, complacently regarding his burly proportions, and shaking his nephew heartily by the hand.

"And aunt, too! I declare, you must have lived in clover since I saw you last. And Bess! why, how you've grown! Must have one, the Great Mogul to the contrary notwithstanding."

And bending down to take a cousinly salute, he was somewhat startled at receiving such a boom on the ear from the insulted beauty as made his head ring on his shoulders.

"Take that, Mr. Impertinent, and learn to ask in a different style next time," she cried, laughing at the young man's look of bewilderment.

"Bess, Bess!" exclaimed the scandalized mother, "aint you ashamed of yourself to treat your cousin Roger in such a hoydenish manner? I'm sure I don't know what that girl will come to," she added, parenthetically, with a sigh and shake of the head, as she folded up her glasses and put them in her pocket.

"Now, Cousin Bessie," said Roger, good-humoredly, "they used to call me in college the Grand Unsempathetic Ethereal Rearing Bumping Invincible Tiger, because I never gave up what I once undertook, you see; so you must excuse me (seizing her in his arms) since you decline to help me voluntarily to Venus's Patent Panacea for the ear-ache, if (smack, smack) I ev (smack) er (smack) help—ev (smack) myself (smack, smack, smack)."

"Let me go, sir—let me go," screamed the surprised and mortified girl, "or I'll never speak to you again as long as I live—never!" And she ran off up stairs to hide her tears of anger and vexation.

"Served her right, boy—served her right!" said the squire, as soon as he could recover from his astonishment at his nephew's unexpected coup d'état, and the long peals of laughter to which he gave vent on its signal success; "but I reckon you're down in her black books now. Haw, haw, haw! I calc'late you're the first man ever did that to her—eh, Roger? I guess it'll be long enough 'fore you git another."

"Perhaps not," said Roger, demurely.

"Perhaps not!" echoed the squire, incredulously; "you don't expect to catch her agin, do ye? Mebbe you air a purty smart hunter, but you wont trap that 'ere rabbit agin, I can tell ye."

"O, I shan't trouble myself at all! she will come into the trap of her own accord," said Roger, following his uncle and aunt into the house, and depositing his carpet-bag and umbrella in the entry.

"What in the old gallus does the boy mean?" said the squire, turning short round and facing his nephew so abruptly as nearly to throw him sprawling backwards.

"Why he means, uncle," said Roger, laughing, "that the next time he gets a kiss from Jennie Bessie, she will give it to him of her own accord, without his asking."

"Walk, yes," replied the squire, dryly, "I reckon that will be the next time."

Roger felt a little piqued at the skeptical tone of his uncle's voice, and deliberately planting a chair by the open window and seating himself in it, he said:

"If you will give me leave to try, uncle, I'll engage that before three weeks are over, she will kiss me of her own free will before your face and eyes."

"Well, you'd better leave her alone," answered the squire; "you'll only burn your fingers if you handle hot coals, and she isn't exactly a cold 'un. It does well enough once, for a joke; but you'd better make up with her, and not mind her tantrums. You'd come off kinder second-best, I reckon! But I'll give you my best mare Dolly the day you can coax her to kiss ye."

Roger said no more, but mentally resolved to make a little experiment with his pretty cousin, and prove his own ingenuity by obtaining from her, *against* his uncle's predictions, one of those delicious little bonbons of the arch-confectioner, Cupid, which our expressive Anglo-Saxon tongue christens a *kiss*. He had considerable confidence in his powers of fascination, and still more in his strategical abilities; the combination of the two, he reasoned, could not but bring his plans to a successful issue. Meantime the steam of the dinner which was in process of preparation, scented his nostrils, and sharpened his appetite, never very dull, to such a degree that he welcomed the call to the table with the greatest alacrity.

## PART II.

### SHOWING HOW THE VOW WAS KEPT.

It was not long after the arrival of Roger Wheaton at his uncle's house, that the squire rode over to Deacon Covenant's, to have a consultation with him and his brother-committeeman, Colonel Bearskin. This visit was speedily followed by the news, which ran like wildfire through the little town, that Mr. Wheaton, the squire's nephew, who had just graduated at Dartover College, would open an academy in the middle of the town, and would receive applications until the twentieth of September.

There were enough gossiping tongues in the neighborhood to make every man, woman and child in Hanford acquainted with the fact that

Mr. Wheaton's salary, as offered by the committee, in accordance with the vote of the town, would be two hundred dollars per annum, with the privilege of making as much more as he could get. Everybody declared what a fine chance it was for a young man! As it happened, applications began at once to pour in, and Roger soon saw that he should have a full school, at least for the first term; and as the tuition fees of the scholars were his own perquisite, in addition to the two hundred dollars, he made his mind quite at ease on the subject of his next year's operation. Moreover, as he was to board at his uncle's, he saw the way clear for carrying into execution a scheme his fertile brain had already concocted for securing the now coveted kiss from the rosy lips of his fair cousin. To be sure, he sometimes regretted his braggadoocio boasting, when he looked at her spirited little head, and he felt secret misgivings that he should never bestride the handsome mare Dolly, as his own property. He saw plainly enough that notwithstanding her coquetties and saucy, self-reliant manner, she was at heart coy and shy as a wild deer of the woods, and was far more of a mature woman than he had given her credit for being. He felt half inclined to give up this mock chase, and then perhaps—pshaw! what a fool he was! So he watched his opportunity.

Two weeks elapsed, and Roger had long ago made peace with Bess, and they were often together. The bilberries furnished an excuse for many a ramble in the pastures and fields; but Roger was not altogether pleased to see that for some unaccountable reason Bess was almost sure to be accompanied by her friend Jennie Singleton, who lived in a little house on the banks of the Assanquet. Why he should object to the society of a very pretty and intelligent girl, who evidently liked him much, we leave to better magicians than ourself to divine; but as to the fact itself, there can be no doubt. He concealed all chagrin, however, and devoted his energies to making himself as attractive as possible to his cousin, who found him of a very different character from her other admirers; for the first time she had met her equal.

They were in the squire's garden together, one forenoon, only two days before the expiration of the three weeks, and, strange to say, Jennie Singleton was not present. A peach tree, well loaded with luscious fruit, hung its gifts near where they were standing, and one large downy, mellow peach caught the fancy of the young girl, who pointed it out to Roger.

"What! that one?" said he. "Perhaps I might reach it, if my arm were as long as the

Boston Liberty Pole. "Is there any particular star in the milky way you would like me to fish for you, Bessie?"

"No, thank you," she replied, with a mock curtsy, "my cousin Roger is more brilliant than any star, and he is always visible in my horizon."

"He will be most happy to set, if his radiance is too refulgent," said Roger, taking off his hat and making a low bow.

"I should prefer to see him rise, at least as far as that peach," was her answer; "but perhaps such a star would be put out, if it had to climb a tree."

"Well, then, here I go, Bess, regardless of expense!" exclaimed he, with a face of feigned terror, as he nimbly swung himself among the branches. "Adam fell because of an apple, and if Roger Wheaton falls because of a peach; remember it was a woman tempted them both!"

So saying, he climbed up as high as he thought the branches would bear him, but found the peach still beyond his reach. Unwilling, however, to give up, perhaps through fear of losing his soubriquet of the Invincible Tiger, he strained forward as far as he could, keeping hold of a small bough with one hand, while he reached forth with the other. But his last words were ominous; just as he was on the point of securing the prize, the bough which supported his weight gave way, and after an ineffectual effort to save himself by clutching at another branch, he fell heavily to the ground and lay motionless. Bessie stood aghast for a moment, and then, without losing her presence of mind, ran to her cousin and raised his head—at the same time calling loudly for her father. Before many seconds had elapsed, her father and two hired men were carrying the senseless form of the young man into the house, where they laid him on a bed, and tore off his cravat.

"No bones are broken, thank God!" ejaculated the squire, feeling his legs and arms; "but no thanks to the pesky tree. Rub his wrists, wife, and wet 'em in cold water; and here, Bess," he added, turning to the poor girl, who, now that she could do no more, stood "like Niobe, all tears," "chafe his temples, and pour cold water on 'em, too!"

By some chance, the two women exchanged offices; good Mrs. Ketchup took his head, and Bess his wrists, laving them plentifully with nature's ever-ready restorative (prythee, kind reader, do not take us for hydropathists), and using their best efforts to resuscitate the lifeless figure before them. As Bess looked at the pale, handsome face of her prostrate cousin, a new

feeling sprang up in her bosom, different from any previous tenant of that lovely mansion, which she called to herself by the harmless name of pity. (And here, O fair reader! let a friend speak a word to you in confidence—all for your own good, of course—when you begin to "pity" a handsome young fellow, no matter for what reasons recover, beware! beware! for the little god masks himself in no disguise oftener than in the garb of Pity.) The truth was, Roger was by no means an ill-flavored twig of the tree of humanity; and Bess was never so fully aware of this interesting fact as at the present moment, when he lay helpless and insensible through his desire to gratify an idle whim of hers. Her mother, too, was so struck with a likeness to her own honored spouse, whom the good lady dearly loved—a likeness all the more prominent from the perfect immobility of the features—that she stooped down and gently kissed the pale white forehead of her nephew. The young man opened his eyes.

"Uncle!" said he, faintly, while a feeble smile played over his face.

"Well, lad, how be you now?" was the answer, as the squire bent down to catch the words his nephew was essaying to speak.

"Is Dolly safe?"

The squire looked with a puzzled expression now at his wife and now at his daughter.

"Is Dolly safe, I say!" repeated Roger. "I'll trot her out to-morrow, and see how it feels to own a lively mare."

"Not so fast, I reckon," said the squire, fully understanding the young fellow's drift by this time, and with the faintest ghost of a smile flickering round his mouth. "I calculate she won't change hands in a hurry, boy, though you're welcome to ride whenever you're able."

Roger turned his head so as to see Bess, and at once comprehending his mistake, said, with a decided blush and a much more energetic expression of voice than before:

"Hang the luck! I needn't have played possum quite so long." At the same time, he got up slowly and limped to a rocking-chair, with a strange mixture of amusement, mortification and physical pain in his face.

Bessie looked in astonishment at her cousin, evidently thinking him out of his mind, and then at her father, for some clue to the riddle. But Roger laid his finger on his lip, when her head was turned, and glanced meaningly at the squire. The two women, however, were so rejoiced at his recovery, that they asked no questions as to what they merely considered the incoherencies of returning consciousness. But the look of per-

plexity that occasionally clouded Bessie's brow, showed that this explanation was not fully satisfactory to her, at least.

The next day, Roger exhibited few signs of having been seriously injured by his fall; on the contrary, he found himself able to walk as far as Miss Singleton's dwelling, and to request to see the young lady. She was somewhat surprised at this unexpected honor, but did not refuse an audience to her young and handsome visitor.

The interview was not very long, but Roger, as he left the door, wore a look of satisfaction and complacency on his countenance, and there was a quizzical expression on the features of the young lady as she watched his retreating figure. All that day he was more than usually attentive to his cousin, and, as she felt some compunctions of conscience at having caused the accident of the preceding day, she received his attentions with more than her usual urbanity and kindness. The squire watched his motions with a curious eye; but in the imperturbable gravity of his strongly-marked physiognomy, you could read little of what was passing within.

After tea, which took place at the old-fashioned country hour of half past five, the squire and his nephew were sitting together in the growing twilight, while Bess and her mother were engaged in their household duties, in another part of the house, when a light rap was heard at the door, and a soft voice inquired:

"Is Bess at home to-night, squire?"

"Wall, yes, I guess so," was the reply; "nless she's harnessed the horse and cleared out in less than no time. She was here half a minute ago. Come in, Jennie! Sit ye down, and I'll call the gal right away."

With these words, he left the room and presently returned, followed by Bess. The room was nearly dark by this time, as candles were only so many baits for mosquitoes; and the squire's only weakness was a terror of those winged pests of summer. In the uncertain light Bess advanced hesitatingly towards her friend; and, just as she took her hand and leaned forward to kiss her mouth (how provoking to see women waste their honey on one another!) the treacherous Jennie slipped her head aside, and the ready mouth of Roger received the proffered salute. A suppressed giggle at her side first warned poor Bess of the mistake she had made; but when she heard her cousin say to her father, "Well, uncle, perseverance is a 'rum 'un,' and I'll try Dolly to-morrow. if you please," the whole truth flashed across her mind, and with a low sob, covering her face, she noiselessly stole out of the parlor.

The squire made no response to Roger's remark. Deliberately lighting a candle, he looked around for Bess, but found her gone. Having carefully snuffed the candle and closed the windows, he left the room, and his heavy boots were presently heard ascending the stairs that led to Bessie's chamber. Roger and Miss Singleton looked in one another's faces without speaking a word, alarm unmistakably painted on her every feature, and uneasiness as plainly written on his. At last she likewise left the room, and inercely saying—"I am afraid, Mr. Wheaton, I have hurt my friend and done you no good," she took her homeward path down the hill.

### PART III.

#### SHOWING THE RESULTS OF THE VOW.

At breakfast, the next morning, Bess appeared silent and wholly changed in her demeanor; her sprightliness was gone, and her eyes showed signs of a restless, perhaps tearful, night. The squire likewise was rather taciturn, and made no allusion to the events of the preceding evening. Although Roger endeavored to dispel the gloomy atmosphere of the breakfast-table with his accustomed raillery and jocoseness, his shots rather hung fire, and provoked but little merriment. No sooner was the ceremony of the morning repast concluded (and it was not much more than a ceremony), than Roger seized his gun and started for the woods, hoping that by noon the effects of his unlucky pertinacity in keeping his resolve might have worn away.

For an hour or two he strolled through the woods in search of game, but at last, wearied with ill success and his own uneasy thoughts, he turned his steps toward the banks of the Assa-quot; and finding himself not far from an old haunt of his boyhood, he resolved to visit it again, and rest awhile in the shade. The woods descended from the top of a hill of considerable elevation to the water's edge, and half a dozen large trees formed a little clump together nearly in the form of a semi-circle; while in front the river had hollowed out the broad pool much deeper than the rest of the stream, in which the water slowly eddied round and round. Here Roger and his cousin had been accustomed to float paper boats in former years; and his boyish ingenuity had formed a delightful little arbor by weaving evergreen branches together, from trunk to trunk, and carefully clearing away all dead boughs and underbrush. This romantic little retreat he had christened with the name of Bessie's Bower, and many a happy half-day had they spent in its calm seclusion, before they had

been separated by his departure for college. By some impulse which he did not care to analyze too closely, Roger was drawn to visit the spot once more; and, pre-occupied with his own thoughts, he found himself there before he was aware of it. The little arbor was partly concealed from view by intervening bushes and trees; but as he was turning aside to find the old entrance, he was startled by seeing his cousin, with her hands clasped before her, leaning carelessly against a veteran pine. For several moments he stood petrified at the sight. Her bonnet lay beside her, and her hair, escaping from its confinement, lay drooping upon her shoulders, its wavy brown tresses mingling and twining in exquisite confusion. The perfect colorlessness of her face, enhanced by the dark background of the tree's trunk, gave her beauty a more delicate loveliness than usually belonged to her fresh, rosy face. Her eyes were fixed upon the river, and her whole attitude was expressive of entire self-forgetfulness. Roger was unable for some minutes to do aught but contemplate the beautiful statue before him; and it was only with an effort that he at last broke the spell and said in a low tone of voice:

"Bessie!"

The girl startled, and, meeting his glance with a frightened air, for a moment stood irresolute what course to pursue. The only exit from the arbor was by the opening where Roger now stood, and she seemed at first to shrink from approaching him; but soon recovering her self-possession, she moved forward with a quiet dignity which Roger had never beheld before, and said, calmly:

"Let me pass, if you please, sir."

"No, Bessie," exclaimed the young man, passionately "stay just a moment, if only to hear me ask forgiveness for my shameful conduct, and to tell me that you will pardon it."

The pale face before him, which as yet had not changed color, became suddenly suffused with a blush so deep that the rebellious blood mounted even to the roots of her hair, and tinged her neck with its rosy hue.

"I cannot stay," she replied, hurriedly. "I have nothing to pardon; or if I have, it is all forgotten. You must let me pass, indeed you must."

"Bessie, dear Bessie," pleaded Roger, retiring a step, but holding out his arms to prevent her egress, "I have been a wretch, a cruel, heartless wretch, and wounded the feelings of her I love best in all the wide world. Yes, I love you, I love you," he cried, with increased vehemence, "and I would die for you, if that would make

you happier. O, believe me, Bessie dear, and tell me you will forgive the past."

"I have told you so already," said she, turning again pale as ashes, and trembling from head to foot; "but how can you speak to a woman of love, when you prove by your conduct that you do not respect her? Yes, you make her the subject of a disgraceful bet, and that, too, with her own father, and then insult her still more by speaking of love! O, Roger, Roger!"

The poor girl covered her face with her hands, and sobbed aloud.

"It is too true, Bessie, dear," said the young man, sadly, "and the second crime is worse than the first. I have no right to speak of love where I have sinned so deeply, and I will go where I can love alone, without paining by my presence the heart of her I love better than my own life. May God bless you, dearest, and send you a worthier, nobler heart than mine to lean upon."

The poor fellow dashed his hand across his eyes, and stooped down to pick up the gun he had dropped. As he rose again, he cast one look back at Bessie, before leaving her to go or stay, as she chose. She had dropped her hands from before her face, and was looking at him with all her soul in her blue, moist eyes. In their clear depths shone what a world of earnest, strong, unspoken love! It was but a pause—a step—a cry—and the two were locked in one another's arms.

Reader, will you believe it?—Bessie's soft lips, of their free will, imprinted a kiss on the mouth of her Cousin Roger; and what is worse it was not the last time they did it!

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#### VERY CONCLUSIVE.

"John," inquired a dominie of a hopeful pupil, "what is a nailer?" "A man who makes nails," replied Hopeful, quite readily. "Very good. Now what is a tailor?" "One who makes tails," was the equally quick reply. "O, you blockhead," said the dominie, biting his lips; "a man who makes tails, did you ever?" "To be sure," quoth Hopeful; "if the tailor didn't put tails to the coats he made they would all be jackets!" "Eh?—ah!—well!—to be sure. I didn't think of that. Beats Watts's logic! Go to the top of the class, John; you'll be member of parliament some day."—*English Paper.*

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#### MEN'S SINS.

There are two great sins of men—drunkenness in the lower classes; a still worse form of vice in the higher, which I believe women might help to stop, if they tried. Would to God I could cry to every young working woman, "Never encourage a drunken sweetheart!" and to every young lady thinking of marriage, "Beware! better die than live to give children to a loose principled, unchaste father."—*A Life for a Life.*

## THE UMBRELLA BITE-BIT.

It rained hopelessly. The clouds came down in sheets and sluices. Mons. de H—, an elegant "of the first water," found this second water too wet for him. He was islanded under another man's portico, and not a hackney-coach or an umbrella within screaming at. Suddenly around the corner comes a plain citizen, housed under a protecting canopy of blue cotton and whalebone; but under this enviable umbrella, walking alone. A thought seizes Mons. de H—. He rushes to the citizen's side, and seizing him affectionately by the arm, commences an eager narration of a touching event. Not giving his astonished listener time to respond, he hurries him along—sharing his umbrella, of course, as he goes—and clinging closely to his side, and vociferating the confidential communications till they arrive at the Boulevard, he stops at a café, and then, for the first time, apparently, takes a surprised look at the face of his umbrella-lender. Overwhelming apologies—had wholly mistaken the person—thought it was his most intimate friend—begs ten thousand pardons—and dodges into the safe inside of a coffee-house. But the fun was to be in telling the story. To a convulsed circle of delighted fellow-dandies, Mons. de H— was telling his adventures, when, by chance placing his hand upon his heart, he missed the usual protuberance in his vest pocket. The valuable gold watch was gone! In his close clinging to the apparently plain citizen, the gay joker had hugged a pickpocket, and—"consequence was!" But he was subsequently fonder of "a dry joke" than a wet one.—*Paris Letter.*

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 TRACES OF DREAMS.

Persons are frequently at a loss to account for the reception of certain impressions, which are commonly a source of erroneous judgment. Sir H. Holland observes: "There are few who have not occasionally felt certain vague and fleeting impressions of a past state of mind, of which the recollection cannot by any effort take a firm hold, or attach them to any distinct points of time or place; something that does not link itself to any part of life, yet is felt to belong to the identity of the being. These are not improbably the shades of former dreams; the consciousness, from some casual association, wandering back into that strange world of thoughts and feelings in which it has existed during some antecedent time of sleep, without memory of it at the moment, or in the interval since."—*Medical Notes.*

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 PLAIN FEATURES.

Plainness of features is not at all incompatible with beauty. There is a great deal of difference between a person's being plain and being ugly. A person may be very plain, and yet attractive and interesting in both countenance and manner, and surely no one could call such a person ugly. An ugly face is repulsive. There are no rules that can be depended on for the settlement of beauty; and still less can ugliness be defined, otherwise than by itself. If we were asked to say what constitutes an ugly woman, we could not reply. We know there are such, for we have seen them.—*Home Journal.*

## THE MYSTERIOUS PIANO.

Not long since I was invited to pay a visit to some friends out of town. In the family were three young ladies, besides young children. Being musical, we spent the greater part of the first evening of my visit in singing and playing, and at the proper hour retired for the night, as we supposed. As I was a great favorite with all the girls, each one wanted to sleep with me, and to effect this, it was decided that instead of going to my room, I should remain in their double-bedded room. Accordingly, instead of going to sleep, we lay and talked (as girls often do) some hours. Milly touched me on the arm in the middle of a most interesting account of the opera and certain regular attendants there, and said:

"C., do you hear that?"

"Hear what? I do not listen to people when they are not talking to me," naturally supposing she referred to Margaret and Fanny, who were in the other bed.

"There! now, girls, don't you hear it? Some one is playing on the piano."

"Who can it be?" said Milly. Why did you not look it, Fanny—it is your place to do it?"

"Well," said Fanny, "I did, and the key is in the pocket of my dress."

This, of course, we would not believe. So, trembling from head to foot, she got up, dark as it was, found the dress with the key in its pocket. All this while we heard the piano, sounding in simple scales from top to bottom, and *vice versa*, but producing the most wonderful quality of tone, resembling those of a musical box more than anything else.

We had all heard of spirits, and were quite sure there were some in the house, for it was not probable that any of the children would be up at that hour of the night. So it was decided that we should hold each other by the hand, and go across the hall to father's room. All this time the scales were being played on the piano, as if some one had been ordered to practice for an hour. We succeeded in awakening Mr. W., and in a few minutes he came out with a light in his hand, when we formed a procession after him, with chattering teeth, but withal eager faces, for our curiosity was stronger than our fear. We enter the parlor; sure enough the piano is shut and locked, while the gamut is being played regularly and distinctly. The father asks for the key—all the girls scream out at once:

"Don't open it; it must be spirits."

But Mr. W. does not believe in piano-playing spirits, and opens the instrument, while we are all huddled together, and he exclaims:

"Gracious me, it's a mouse!"

How we laughed and screamed, and looked for the little animal; but 'twas no use, mousey had practised his lesson and gone.

It was easy to account for the evenness of his playing, as he was too small to skip a note, and therefore touched every one.—*Musical World.*

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 PRAISE.

O, who would ever care to do brave deed,  
Or strive in virtue others to excel,  
If none should yield him his deserved meed,  
Due praise, that is the spur of doing well?  
For if good were not praised more than ill,  
None would choose goodness of his own free will.  
SPANZEN.



[ORIGINAL.]

EMBARKED.

BY EDWIN S. LISBONER.

Embarked at last! For many years  
The vessel lay a desolating wreck,  
Blown where no warning light appears  
The clouded sky with hope to flock;  
From year to year, in creaking pain,  
To drift and dash the rocks again.

That bay, wherein it idly cast  
The fairest winds of time away;  
Those stagnant waters of the past,  
Those heavy clouds that held their sway;  
All were of passion's stormy theme,  
But nevermore the ship to gain.  
For one fond day a beauteous star  
Pierced strugglingly the lowering sky;  
With loving beams it bathed each spar,  
And hushed each sail's unceasing sigh;  
The vessel opening with hope upright,  
Arrived again by that pure light.

There rose a fairer, gentler breeze,  
And cleared away the angry sky;  
In sparkling beauty rolled those seas  
Before concealed from weary eye;  
Bright isles of verdure reared afar  
Their winning arms beneath the star.

The boulder came, whose loving hand  
Renewed with grace each sinking part  
So long degraded, yet to stand  
Accepted by his yearning heart:  
Now, fairly trimmed, with swelling sail,  
The vessel voices the prosperous gale.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE CONFESSION OF AN UNHAPPY AUTHOR.

BY MARY W. JANVRAIN.

I AM in deep affliction. The poisonous breath of authorship has envenomed my being—its miseries have pierced my soul. I know now, by the test of sad experience, the strength and bitterness of that mysterious curse invoked by "the man of Uz" upon his unnamed foe, "O, that mine enemy would write a book!" for, possessed by the mania *scribendi*, I feel that my better angel has departed, and I am fast becoming demoralized, weakened, unmanned.

Will you, good Mr. Editor, listen to the confession of my miseries? Will you give them to the public, that so, perchance, some fellow-traveller, warned by my example, may shun the wild Charybdis against which my bark of happiness has been shattered? Contrary to the irregular Horatian maxim of plunging "*in medias res*," I will "begin with the beginning" and end with the end.

My antecedents will perhaps account in part for my tastes and predilections, for I came of a bookish family. My grandfather destroyed his eyesight by the common error of reading at twilight, in his old, well-thumbed volume of Josephus; my paternal relative was a great reader from his youth up, and I have a distinct memory of his always poring over some volume during the noonning in haying time, and the long winter evenings of my boyhood; and my mother was a learned woman, though gentle and unpedantic in the greatest degree. Then I had scores of uncles, and grown-up cousins who were either lawyers, doctors, or teachers—thus you see it ran in the family to take to books.

In my early boyhood it was a matter of astonishment how great a number of books I had devoured. All was fish that came to my net. I borrowed, when my own stock and the limits of the little library in the old farm-house was exhausted; I devoured Homer, Milton, and Shakespeare, Cervantes, Bunyan and Defoe, Robertson, Rollin, and the old dog-eared edition of Josephus, besides sea stories, magazines, and all the newspapers and light romances I could manage to procure. Later, I raced through the Waverley novels, and Cooper's; and in my teens was an intense admirer of Professor Ingraham's style. I lost a night's sleep over *Consuelo*, and fasted two days over the *Wandering Jew*. And small need to recall here the exciting mysteries of the Count of Monte Cristo, and other kindred tales. During my days of history reading I was conscientiously opposed to the habit of skipping—I wanted to say truthfully that I had read a work through—but latterly, when quality was exchanged for quantity, I fear I grew superficial. Like the gourmand who performs huge gastronomic feats, I gorged myself with the solids of the intellectual world of food, then finished off with such a repletion of the lighter trifles of the dessert, that the only wonder now is that I did not drop down some day in a sort of mental apoplexy produced by a surfeit of good things.

But, passing all this dreamy, bookish, blissful period of boyhood, I will speak of that time when, after a course of academic preparation, my good sire informed me one day that the profits of the farm would allow him to put into execution the favorite plan of himself and my mother, to wit, that I should be sent to college. Very fresh was the foster-chicken who sheltered himself under the wide-spread, protecting wings of our venerated Dartmouth. It was the parting wish of my mother, before I followed the trunk packed with my new shirts and warm

knitted socks to the stage-coach in waiting at the farmhouse gate, that I should distinguish myself in college, and obtain the valedictory. In this, however, my kind mother was destined to disappointment, for so quiet and musing had my life been among my books, that I failed to catch the spur of emulation; and I may as well say here, that, while buried in college studies I was distanced in the race for college honors.

But it was there that I acknowledge to have first imbibed the ambition of authorship. It was in one of the debating societies so common to all institutions that I first actually uttered my own thoughts, next, I became a contributor to the "Lit. and Sci.," a magazine edited by the students, and labelled incipient genius from one brown cover to the other.

I produced two poems and an essay over the modest signature of Tryphiodorus, and though the seniors were high, careless and cold, the juniors jealous, and the sophomores too busy in hard study or harder frolicking to praise my bantling efforts (for, somehow, the secret of their paternity soon leaked out), I found my comfort in the freshmen. They—I well remember them—a set of honest, unhackneyed fellows, who gave me a warm panegyric without a limiting clause! Unsophisticated, fresh-hearted, unselfish boys! They entered bears, I made them lions. I treated them to the sweetest wines, the best principles, the fattest oysters. I even introduced them to my sweetheart (for there was a blue-eyed girl in Hanover whom I found infinitely more agreeable than my alma mater)—Heaven forgive the most daring of 'em who cut me out, for I never did! But, personal piques aside, I will eulogize those freshmen.

From the day when my articles were published and praised, I date my ruin. The itch for writing and the lust for fame shot like fire through all my being. The abundant leisure left from the performance of college exercises was employed in writing. I sent a romance to the editor of a popular magazine. It was accepted. I was in ecstasies. My *nom de plume* should ring from the pine woods of Maine to the bayous of Texas. About that time it was, too, that the aforementioned freshman supplanted me in my dulcinea's affections; thus I had ample leisure to court the muses instead. I would show her yet, when the country should resound with my fame, whom she had slighted and scorned for a beardless freshman!

As I said, the lust for writing was in my veins. I had written and been praised again. Some of these articles were published, some rejected, and some remained suspended like souls in "limbo

patrum," uncursed and unbeatified, for I never learned their fate. Perhaps, from this, I should have taken warning, but the spell of authorship was on me, more powerful than the Circe's of old, and I could not resist. I was another being than the quiet bookworm student who had entered those venerated walls. Ever since the birth of my first born, and its arrayal in types and paper, I had become another man. I no longer lived in myself, but in my children—the bantlings of my brain. No more did I worship literature and imagination for their own sweet selves; but, like a priest at the altar, professionally. I began to look jealously upon other authors, too, lest they appropriated laurels which might be mine; I regarded the whole fraternity as odious rivals, whose triumphs were builded on the ashes of my defects. So I wrote on—much, and sometimes not wholly ill—robbing myself often of needful rest and sleep in pursuit of the shadow—fame.

There was one thing which troubled me in those days. Did I take pride in any particularly fine sentiment, or new thought, I was sure sometime to stumble on the same thing, under cover, perhaps of a slightly different garb, away back in some old volume I took up when weary. It vexed me. I began to believe there was no such thing as originality, because they chanced to write first. What right had they to appropriate the privilege of "squatting" over the whole realm of imagination, leaving no wild spot for future pioneer to clear? "The old poets be hanged," I said, "they have left us nothing but miserable, refuse ideas, or common-place imitation." I hated them in a body, and banished all but Shakspeare, consoling myself with the thought of his splendid originality and completeness. It is often thus that a little mind takes shelter under the shadow of a great one, as a little boat sends its passengers aboard, and swings by the davits at the lee side of a noble ship when vexed and storm-tossed.

But not to be prolix, I pass on. I left college. Though I did not win salutatory honors, I passed for a fair student, and came off with good repute. My mother came up to see me graduate. My father sat in the hall, too, and between commencement exercises read through a copy of the New England Farmer, with an eye to the crops at home, I suppose; but for all that, I felt he was proud of his boy, and thought him almost as erudite as any big wig of the college faculty on the rostrum.

I went home to the farmhouse; but it was too dull there, besides, it had been decreed that I was to become a lawyer; so, after a month

among the granite hills, I was duly entered as student in the office of Judge Roscoe, at Portsmouth.

It is true that at this era my preferences for an author's life and vocation were asserted, but these my father stoutly contested.

"Nonsense—write books—the world is full of 'em now. It's a starving trade. Go take the law, and make the fame you're talking about with a comfortable fortune tacked on the end of it. A writer?—I won't listen to't."

And so, to appease paternal predilections, I forsook for a season the more flowery walks of literature. The old judge gave me the credit of saying he never had a harder student. But it grew dry food soon—the law—drier than the fare at the college commons. Acts and sections would transform themselves into cantos and verses—lengthy dogmas would disappear in sonnets and imaginative weavings. I scribbled quotations from the bard of Stratford-upon-Avon all over the title page and blank leaves of my law books, and tied up manuscripts for the magazines with the red tape on the lawyer's table.

About this time, too, as almanac makers say, a new star dawned on my life. I still wrote, but mostly snatches of sentiment and sonnets now, and my existence became at once halved and two-fold. For I had given, and had received.

"What was the matter? Was I in love? Should he serve a subpoena for the court of Hymen?" jokingly queried the old judge one day in a bantering mood.

I did not answer him, for the time had not yet come when I could avow that a mightier than the love of authorship was upon me. But, Mr. Editor, truthfulness to you demands that I should here speak of the greatest joy and the greatest misery of my life—that I should speak of her whose love I had the happiness to appropriate while the dew of youth was on her. Her beauty, grace and purity I shall not attempt to describe, for they were indescribable. Her picture is best drawn in that golden line of Allan Ramsay:

"Wild, witty, winsome, beautiful, and young."

I will call her Jennie, for that is a sweet name, though there is never a Jennie in the world so sweet and lovely as she—Jennie Roscoe, the judge's only daughter.

There wasn't a particle of pride in her, or I am sure the courted beauty never would have looked encouragingly on her father's law student; but she did, and she told me she loved me in her soft, endearing way, and though I mustn't

let papa know it yet awhile, she'd coax him over by-and-by—she could do anything with papa—and she was very sure she loved me.

So said little blue-eyed Jennie Roscoe. And so the thrilling hope of one day calling her mine, was like nectar of the gods to my thirsty lips. But I must hasten to the unhappy circumstance which I cannot fail to attribute to the miserable fact of my being an author.

One evening in June, a soft, rose-scented evening, I remember it well, I found myself in the elegant parlor where Jennie looked bewitchingly like a blush rose in her young beauty. We talked long at the open window; then Jennie ordered lights, for she had a new song she wanted to sing for me. I listened to her sweet, bird-voice, and I suppose she read my admiration in my eyes; then, just before leaving, I took up the June number of the — magazine, which lay on the parlor table.

*En passant*, Mr. Editor, let me tell you that Jennie liked this magazine, and I wrote for it, though she did not know that, and that this very number contained one of my effusions. With a lover's natural desire to obtain his mistress's approbation, I read aloud the poem, and then asked how she liked the "Lines to a Dove, in blank verse?"

"Well, then, if you want my opinion," she replied, gayly, "I think they were written by a great goose, and had better be named 'Lines to a Goslin'! Blank verse—that is rightly called—blank enough, destitute of either melody or sense. I could grind better poetry than that myself out of our Bridget's coffee mill!"

I forgot to mention, Mr. Editor, that Jennie was always inclined a little to innocent satire; but you will have perceived that. I was horrified, shocked, petrified. An author's nature could not endure it. I quite forgot prudence, and also that Jennie was innocent of intentional unkindness. I remarked testily:

"Then if you think so very meanly of these verses, Miss Jennie, it is evident I never can suit you."

"George, you must be the author, and I did not know it. Why didn't you tell me? Forgive me," and she laid her little hand in mine, "I have unconsciously wounded you."

"I suppose you judge me to be its author because it is devoid of either harmony or sense. Those were your words, Miss Roscoe," I replied, angrily, flinging her hand away.

"Don't, dear George," she said, sweetly and soothingly, in a pained voice. "You distress me. I only judged this because of your sudden anger. Besides, I hardly heard you read the

poem—I was thinking of something else—and I dare say I should find it excellent if I listened aright. You will surely forgive me?"

But anger was in complete possession of me. "I dare say you were thinking of something else—somebody else perhaps, Miss Roscoe," I answered, satirically. "A thousand thanks for your kind offer to find something excellent in the poem; but I will relieve you of that trouble. I do not covet of your kindness what your taste cannot appreciate."

"Very well, sir," she retorted with flashing eyes, and cheeks red as the scarlet roses gone to sleep on the bushes in the frontyard of her father's mansion, "if this is a fair specimen of your temper, I believe you told the truth when you said you would not suit me."

"And I am very certain, miss, that you would never suit me, for your sarcastic tongue would fire a statue. Good evening, miss," and straightening myself *a la* poker, I prepared to bow myself from her presence.

"Good evening, sir," she returned, indignantly, and her little form got taller, and her cheeks redder, "I wish you joy of your amiability. But hadn't you better take along with you your 'Lines to a Goslin?'" And she lifted the magazine from the table with a polite gesture. "For if the little musician should ever grow to healthy goosehood, it might furnish additional feathers for your cap."

As I stalked away from Judge Roscoe's front door in about the tallest kind of rage I ever boiled in, how I wished his daughter was a man, that I might kill her!

That night I read over with savage gusto that old classic, Juvenal's Sixth Satire—the most merciless invective ever hurled by man against gentle woman.

But with the morning came cool repentance and reflection. I sent her a note of apology. It was brought back by her father's office boy, unopened. In the evening I called. But the maid who answered the bell brought me a card on which was pencilled that the cause of my hasty fever the evening before had given her a chronic chill, and consequently she should continue indisposed—to see me.

It was enough. I could not humiliate myself further, and I left that house. I have never called on her since; but I have met her several times in the street, pale, self-possessed, and lovelier than ever, and I have turned away with a sharp, quick pang at my heart, followed by days of blue-devil companionship and haunting regret.

Thus, good Mr. Editor, have I confided to

you this greatest woe which came upon me because of my unhappy authoring propensities. I could enlarge to infinitude on other particulars, but I forbear. I will only say, that, from that period I abandoned Judge Roscoe's law office and his books, and sought solace for my miseries in their cause, as the Orientals apply one poison as the antidote for another.

I have projected a work to be issued in serial form, entitled "The Life and Miseries of an Unfortunate Author." The Harpers, to whom I have written, asking their opinion if such a work would meet the sale of Uncle Tom's Cabin, have not yet replied to me. But I shall doubtless hear from them soon, for I am confident that this work will bring fame to both publisher and author.

I am collecting material for five novels, a grand epic, and three dramas. I work furiously, rapidly. I have in course of preparation a "Treatise on Metamorphosis," which must be completed before the expiration of the month, and an article for the "Great Cochituate Falminator," as well as a poem in twelve cantos for the new "Parnassian Dipper."

There is this originality about all my writings—I get up taking, popular works—novels, poems, dramas and others, without a single romantic sentiment. I have sworn to eschew such henceforth from everything my pen gives to the public. Indeed, I intend devoting a long treatise to a new theory, called "Anti Love-Life," in which I design to prove that the world would be infinitely better off without women.

My friends tell me that I am toiling too hard, that I look neither healthy nor happy. And I will be frank with you, kind Mr. Editor, though I am not with them. I am neither well nor happy. I only write steadily, day after day, to kill time and drown memory. This *typeoid* fever which is upon me is consuming my life.

My friends advise sanatory measures—a new regimen—and I have taken enormous doses of medicine, lived on cold water and cucumbers, and whatever else was depletive; but all to no purpose. Reduction of the physical system only renders the mind more feverishly active.

They recommend to me now the water cure, and I may be induced to give it a trial, for I feel that unless the overcharged mind be relieved, I must surrender to inevitable death.

Can you advise me to any new sanatory measures, good Mr. Editor? Mayhap, during the course of your long acquaintance with the literary world, you have encountered a case similar to mine. If so, can such be cured? For truth compels the confession that mine cannot long be endured.

## THE CARDINAL FLOWER.

BY ALBERT LEIGHTON.

I love each flower beneath the sun,  
Where'er it buds and blows;  
From the pale arbutus that hides like a nun,  
To the flushed and queenly rose.

But the cardinal flower to me is best,  
As, close by the rivulet's brink,  
It regally wears its flaming crest,  
In the woodlands old and dim.

When I walk from the dusty town at morn,  
To rest where the waters flow,  
And pluck from its long and stately stem  
The flower that is mirrored below;

Though I turn again to the ways of trade,  
I care not for gain or loss,  
But seem to lie in the pine-tree's shade,  
Or tread on the tufted moss.

And I peacefully fall asleep at night,  
To the sound of singing streams,  
While the gleam of a thousand leaves of light  
Illumines the realm of dreams.

[ORIGINAL.]

## THE SISTERS.

BY MARGARET VERNER.

## PART FIRST.

Miss HELEN LORIMER dropped her handkerchief. Richard Warner picked up the dainty lace trifle and gave it back into the little pink-gloved hand from which it had slipped. In return for the service, he received a smile, a bow, and a musical "thank you."

If Mr. Warner had been a young man of wealth and position, the bow might have been the thousandth part of an inch lower, and the smile sweeter by as much as six grains of honey, and the "thank you" might have had a trifle less of the iceberg formality, and a trifle more of the sunshine of cordiality in its silver melody. But he was only a poor clerk of her father's with a salary of seven hundred a year, and no personal possessions beyond a handsome face, fine figure, and widowed mother—the latter item to be supported out of the seven hundred. Miss Lorimer conducted herself accordingly.

Mr. Richard Warner walked on very coolly after the little act of courtesy above-mentioned. Miss Lorimer let her great black eyes follow him admiringly for a moment (if his salary hadn't been but five hundred, she couldn't have helped admiring such a fine face and figure), and then she turned them back, half languishingly, half disdainfully to the expressionless countenance of

Augustus Stickney, who had just taken up a standing position beside her.

Mr. Stickney was a young man who had a habit of saying and doing all manner of indescribably soft things, in all manner of indescribably soft ways. He was the owner of a very weak pair of milky blue eyes, a pale yellow moustache, the reputation of a *roué*, and an expectation of a cool fifty thousand in his own right, when the paternal Stickney should see fit to "shuffle off his mortal coil." Miss Lorimer conducted herself accordingly again.

"A very fine-looking fellow—that young Warner—don't you think so, Mr. Stickney?" she asked, arching her pretty brows in a very patronizing manner.

"Passable," replied the young man addressed, lifting with exquisite tact and grace, an eye-glass to the weakest of his weak eyes, and scrutinizing Warner through it with one of those long, aristocratic stares peculiar to well-bred people. "But who is he?"

Now Mr. Stickney didn't ask the question for information. He knew, as well as he knew that the habit of wearing No. 4, ladies' size gaiters was giving him some most excruciating corns, that the gentleman about whom they were conversing, was only a salaried clerk in the employ of his pretty companion's wealthy father. The query, taken in connection with the inquiring lift of the eyelids, and the slightly severe tone in which it was put, was intended to indicate in a delicate way, the great difference between seven hundred dollars annually, with a widowed mother to be supported out of it, and an inheritance of fifty thousand, with only a six foot mahogany coffin between him and its possession. Miss Lorimer understood and appreciated the hint.

"O, he's nobody to be sure! But father has some very eccentric notions, and insists upon our asking him to all our parties, as much as though he were a young lord."

Mr. Warner had made the circuit of the rooms again during this conversation, and was approaching the place where they stood—this time with Miss Adelaide Lorimer on his arm. There couldn't have been a greater contrast, had some little roseate morning cloud taken it into its head to run away with its grandfather, the midnight, than there was between the above named couple—Warner, with his tall, proud figure, in its suit of well-worn, but glossy black broadcloth, his dark, handsome, manly face, and magnificent black eyes—and Adelaide—slight, sylph-like, sunshiny, in her robes of some white, gossamer fabric, with her violet eyes, rose-tinted cheeks,

and soft curls floating to her waist like a golden mist.

They looked well together, nevertheless, and Miss Helen angrily bit a line of milky little teeth into the rose of her under lip on seeing them in each other's company. She had been thinking for the past few minutes what a nice person Mr. Warner would be to flirt with. She was tired of the yellow moustache, weak eyes and insipid gallantries of her devoted Augustus, and though she intended in due course of time to become Mrs. Stickney, unless some suitor with an extra thousand happened along, she couldn't see why for that reason she might not entertain herself by breaking the heart of her father's handsome clerk in the meantime. He was just the one to coquette with. It would be so delightful to entangle him heart and soul in the silken snare of her witcheries and arts, and then slay him, not as Lady Clara Vere de Vere was supposed to slay her humble suitor, "with her noble birth" (for Miss Helen's grandfather had been a butcher, and her father himself commenced life at the very foot of the social ladder), but to knock him down dead (forgive me, dear Tennyson) with her father's stone front mansion, velvet carpets, and her own frigid air of Fifth Avenue contempt.

What right had Miss Adelaide to step in thus unceremoniously between her and her intended victim? It was downright mean, and she wouldn't submit to it. Somehow, by some careless motion of the lady's wrist, her jewelled fan was jostled from its place, and sliding down her long skirt of rose-colored satin, fell directly at Mr. Warner's feet, as that gentleman was passing. Of course he could do no less than disengage his arm from his companion's and restore the misplaced article (Mr. Stickney had turned his head for fear of an introduction), and of course he saw no attempt at fascination in the beaming glance with which Miss Helen's superb eyes acknowledged the politeness. Of course, too, he failed to be aware of any art, in the way that charming young lady managed to engage him in a sentimental conversation, or any coquettish manœuvre in the skilful manner in which it came about that almost before he knew it, Miss Adelaide was promenading the room with Mr. Stickney, and her haughty sister was clinging, a bewildering and affable substitute, to the sleeve of his plebeian coat.

Perhaps, however, he noticed the little shadow of disappointment which flitted over Adelaide's pretty face, as the evening drew to a close, and he found no chance to speak with her again. How could she know that it was not his inclina-

tion, but Miss Helen that held him captive? At any rate, he muttered to himself in the solitude of his chamber that night:

"How provoking it was!—Helen's face may have the most artistic beauty, but Adelaide's is sweet as an angel's.—I wonder when Lorimer intends to raise my salary?"

At the same moment, Miss Helen, languidly disrobing herself, was remarking, with a wearisome yawn which stretched her little rose of a mouth to a width that might have surprised her delicate and fastidious Augustus, that "that Warner was a presuming fellow, and came near making love to her. She would take him down a little, if she died for it. She *did* wish Stickney would dye his moustache;" while Adelaide, listening with burning cheeks, snuggled her golden head down deeper into the great downy pillows, and let the embroidered sleeve of her night-robe fall across her face in such a way as to conceal the suspicious glitter of something very like to tears on her silken lashes, and which made her blue eyes look like May violets after a dash of summer rain has sprinkled the meadows.

#### PART SECOND.

FORTUNE is a very woman for fickleness. (I ask the pardon of all my fair sisters, and beg leave, if the comparison is offensive, to limit it to myself.) She likes to make men woo her ardently and long, and then when they think her won, and begin to bask in the glory of her smiles, to slip like a sunbeam from their embrace, and, coquette-like, fling herself into the arms of some disheartened suitor, for whom she has had only rebuffs and scorn before.

Many a rich man goes to bed at night mumbling over with his lips golden vagaries of speculation, when he should be saying his prayers, and wakes up in the morning a beggar. Many a beggar crawls to his pallet of straw to live over in dreams the bitterness of want, and awakens to find the coffers of some dead millionaire emptied at his feet, and the same hands that denied him alms but yesterday, stretched out in the fawning clasp of good fellowship to-day.

Mr. Richard Warner went to the post-office one morning and got a letter. A very important looking document it was—thick, awkward, and with a foreign post-mark. He had only two correspondents in the world—his mother and his cousin Lizzie. And he turned the strange epistle over two or three times in his hand, before opening it, knowing that it came from neither of them, and wondering where and who it could be from.

He broke the seal in the street; read a few lines and turned white; a few more and turned red; a few more and started on a dead run down the street, making be-crinolined ladies stare and bundle-laden errand boys dodge one side; knocking the breath out of two or three corpulent gentlemen's bodies, and giving a broad leap over the back of one old apple-woman who was stooping down by her fruit-stand to pick up a stray bit of change, and who looked up just in season to see the gentleman's undignified coat-tails fly like a pair of black wings around the corner.

The next thing known of him, he was standing in the counting-room of his employer, Mr. John Lorimer, panting, flushed, trembling—trying to stammer out something, between laughter and tears, about giving up his situation—hundred thousand dollars—old aunt—East Indies—died—left him heir—etc., etc.

The amount of it was the poor clerk had suddenly become a rich man. But when he repeated his intention of giving up his clerkship and entering into business for himself—Mr. Lorimer demurred—hesitated a moment—slapped him on the shoulder—called him a capital fellow (a facetious allusion to his unexpected acquisition of capital, probably), and offered him a partnership in the firm of Lorimer & Co.

Mr. Warner looked out of the window and whistled. Looked up at the ceiling and sighed. Down to the carpet and smiled. Into Mr. Lorimer's face and blushed.

"On one condition he would accede to Mr. Lorimer's proposal."

"What was it?"

"That he should allow him to enter into two partnerships at the same time—one mercantile, the other matrimonial—one with himself, i. e., Mr. Lorimer, the other with Mr. L.'s daughter."

"'Twas agreed—if the daughter had no objections. He meant Helen, of course?"

"No, Adelaide."

"But he couldn't spare Adelaide. She was nothing but a child. Helen was just the right age to marry, and beside—beside—"

Mr. Lorimer stammered there. He didn't like to say that Helen was twenty-four years old—going on twenty-five, and that he was anxious to get her married off. No, indeed—that wouldn't do. He scratched his head, and looked puzzled for a moment. His face brightened all at once.

"He believed Adelaide was engaged to a young lawyer—couldn't say certain. Mr. Warner needn't look so crest-fallen. Helen wasn't engaged. Was certainly the handsomer of the two. Would make the best wife, he thought."

Mr. Warner *didn't* think so, but was too polite to contradict. Hinted that Helen wouldn't marry him.

"Yes she would."

"No she wouldn't."

"Try her and see."

Mr. Warner didn't like to—knew he should fail. A bright idea struck him all at once. "Might he have Adelaide if Helen wouldn't marry him?"

"Yes."

"And Mr. Lorimer wouldn't say anything to Helen about his sudden inheritance?"

"No—no."

"He might go right up to the house and ask her then?"

"Hadn't he better wait until after dinner?"

Mr. L. thought so.

"No—he must go then. He shouldn't take any comfort till his mind was settled."

"Well, run along then."

And he *did* run along. And Mr. Lorimer looking after him, rubbed his chin with the back of his hand in a disconcerted kind of a way, and muttered to himself:

"What a deuce of a hurry the boy is in. The jade will refuse him as sure as the world—and I shouldn't wonder if they both of them did. If he only hadn't made me promise not to say anything about his good fortune!"

He stood with a little vexed shadow on his face for a moment. Then another bright idea was born into his brain.

"But I didn't promise not to *write* anything about it, did I! Ha, ha! John Lorimer, you're an old one. You'll fix it yet."

He went to his desk and dashed off a few lines on paper. Called his errand boy and put it in his hand.

"Run up to the house and give that to Miss Lorimer. You see that man—Mr. Warner—going up the street?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, if you don't get there before he does, I'll break every bone in your little lazy body when you get back, and turn you off without your last week's wages. Do you hear?"

"Y-y-yes—sir!"

(Exit errand boy, making up faces.)

#### PART THIRD.

MISS HELEN LORIMER's hour of triumph had arrived. Mr. Warner had come to the house, and asked for a private interview with her. Of course she knew what he had to say. She wouldn't be afraid to wager anything from her

new gold bracelets to her camel's hair shawl—(cost five hundred dollars)—that he had come to offer himself.

Wouldn't she wither him with her disdain—the presuming beggar! Wouldn't it be rare sport to see him cringe and turn white and apologise! She drew her head up and blazed her eyes experimentally before her mirror, to see how she would look refusing him. She wished he had Stickney's expectations, or Stickney had his handsome face and form. She would act a different part then.

A servant came to the door and handed her a note, just as she was getting ready to descend to the parlor. She glanced at it and threw it on the toilet-table.

"Father's hand-writing. Shall have time enough to read it by-and-by, but *this* fun is too good to be delayed."

She swept down the stairs, and into the richly-furnished drawing-room, like a princess.

It was just as she expected. Mr. Richard Warner made her a plump offer of his heart, hand and fortune, couching his proposal in words rather too cold to give her much of a triumph, and dwelling at much length on his poverty. It wasn't exactly what she had expected from such a man—not half ardent enough. She swallowed her chagrin, however, and gave her haughty head two or three extra tosses, out of sheer spite and revenge.

Richard fidgetted uneasily in his chair, during the moment of silence which followed his offer. Poor fellow! He began to be afraid she *would* accept him in spite of everything. He caught a glance at his handsome face in the mirror opposite, thought of Stickney's sallow, yellow-fringed countenance, and feared it the more. What if she *should*? Horror of horrors! He wouldn't marry her, if she *did*. He vowed he wouldn't. He'd tell her 'twas all a mistake—and he meant her sister. If he couldn't have Adelaide, he wouldn't have anybody.

The lady's first word set him at rest on that score.

"Sir, is it *p-o-s-s-i-b-l-e* that you have misunderstood my condescension in this way? You are very *p-r-e-s-u-m-p-t-u-o-u-s*! My father shall hear of this, and I fear you will lose your situation. Shall I call a servant to show you the door, or can you find it alone?"

"Don't trouble yourself, Miss Lorimer. I beg leave to inform you that it was your father's wishes and not my own that brought me here," replied Warner, with a smile so strange and self-possessed as to bewilder his companion. "Any information which you can give him will there-

fore be unnecessary. If I had not been sure what your answer would have been to my offer, I should never have made it, as nothing could be farther from my real desires than to call you my wife. If you please, I will speak with Miss Adelaide a moment."

With a blasing face, the baffled coquette left her unscathed victim, and ran up to her room, to drown in a flood of angry tears, the shame, mortification and wonder which her interview with Warner had occasioned. She didn't know what to make of the man; but one thing she felt pretty confident of—that she had burned her own fingers instead of his.

An hour later, Adelaide, stealing in, blushing, and happy, to tell her of her betrothal to Richard Warner (for she, like the dear, true-hearted little girl she was, had accepted him in spite of his supposed poverty), found her just tearing open her father's note, and going up beside her, leaned over her shoulder, and the two sisters read together.

"HELEN:—If Warner offers himself, accept him. He's just come in possession of a splendid fortune. I've no time to explain. I shall take him in partnership next week. Be sure and accept him. 'Tis the best match in the city."  
"J. LORIMER."

"P. S. Old Stickney has failed."

Helen fainted!

#### TIME RECKONED BY ONIONS.

The progress of an age depends not so much upon natural growths as artificial appliances. Sixty years ago there were no daily papers. Friction matches had not even enlightened the world. The sun-dial and hour-glass alone took their notes of time. Darkness, it would seem, must have brooded over the earth. "At such a time as this," says a now aged friend, "I was teaching school in a Massachusetts village. One Monday forenoon, I had lost my reckoning, and time wore heavily away. I lounged to dismiss school, but feared to excite the surprise of the parents by sending the children home too early. In this dilemma, an idea struck me. I would send the dullest boy I had with an empty dinner-basket, to the house of a spinster near by, whose hour-glass had a more methodical reputation than mine, with instructions to bring back the time of day in the empty basket. It was not long ere he returned, bearing eleven and a half onions as the result of his expedition. I was satisfied, set my hour-glass in motion, and in half an hour dismissed the school."

#### OLD TREES.

Old trees by night are like men in thought;  
By poetry to silence wrought;  
They stand so still, and they look so wise,  
With folded arms and half-shut eyes,  
More shadowy than the shade they cast,  
When the wan moonlight on the river passed.  
H. W. FABER.